

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. – 15. (Canceled)

16. (New) A process for producing a polyester resin which comprises polycondensing a dicarboxylic acid component containing terephthalic acid or its ester-forming derivative as the main component and a diol component containing ethylene glycol as the main component in the presence of (1) a compound of at least one member selected from the group consisting of titanium group elements in Group 4A of the Periodic Table, via an esterification reaction or an ester exchange reaction, wherein the above compound (1) is added to an esterification reaction tank for a final stage in a multi-stage reaction apparatus or to an esterification reaction or ester exchange reaction product in a stage for transportation to a melt polycondensation step.

17. (New) The process for producing a polyester resin according to Claim 16 which comprises polycondensing terephthalic acid and ethylene glycol in the presence of (1) a compound of at least one member selected from the group consisting of titanium group elements in Group 4A of the Periodic Table, via an esterification reaction, wherein the above compound (1) is added to an esterification reaction tank for a final stage in a multi-stage reaction apparatus or to an esterification reaction product in a stage for transportation to a melt polycondensation step.

18. (New) The process for producing a polyester resin according to Claim 16, wherein the compound (1) is added at such a stage as an esterification rate of an esterification reaction or ester exchange reaction product becomes at least 90%.

19. (New) The process for producing a polyester resin according to Claim 16, wherein the compound (1) is added to an esterification reaction product in a stage for transportation to a melt polycondensation step.

20. (New) The process for producing a polyester resin according to Claim 16, wherein the polycondensation is carried out in the presence of (2) a compound of at least one member selected from the group consisting of metal elements of Group 1A of the Periodic Table, elements of Group 2A of the Periodic Table, manganese, iron and cobalt and (3) a phosphorus compound.

21. (New) The process for producing a polyester resin according to Claim 20, wherein a compound of at least one element selected from the group consisting of metal elements of Group 1A of the Periodic Table, elements of Group 2A of the Periodic Table, manganese, iron and cobalt is added to an esterification reaction tank for a final stage in a multistage reaction apparatus.

22. (New) The process for producing a polyester resin according to Claim 16, wherein the compound (1) is a titanium compound.